



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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 15 MAR 2002

**MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
 CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
 UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
 COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS**

SUBJECT: Travel By Family Members

Department of Defense Directive 4500.56, DoD Policy on the Use of Government Aircraft and Air Travel, outlines procedures for funded travel by family members accompanying DoD personnel on official business, whether on military or commercial carrier. In essence, travel should only be approved when there is an unquestionable official function in which the family member participates or when the travel is in the United States' interest because of diplomatic or public affairs benefit. When one of these criteria is met, travel is allowed on a noninterference basis and must be supported with invitational travel orders. As Code 2 civilians or 4-star general/flag officers, you have the authority to approve, on a case-by-case basis, these invitational travel orders.

The directive also has a provision for unofficial travel on military aircraft, where a family member may accompany a senior DoD official (SES or general/flag officer) who is traveling on official business. There are several restrictions as outlined in paragraph E2.2.3. Unofficial Travel, including the requirement that the Government be reimbursed at the full coach fare (the senior official shall attach to his or her travel voucher a personal check made payable to the Treasurer of the United States and shall include a travel office printout that reflects the full coach fare). Unofficial travel shall be strictly controlled and requires approval in writing in advance by the individuals identified in paragraph E2.4. of the directive.

Invitational travel orders for family members and unofficial travel by family members should be the rare exception, not the rule. We are stewards of taxpayer's funds, and our actions should be beyond reproach. Please ensure you are complying with the spirit and intent of this guidance.

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